

[ORIGINAL.]

THE GOLDEN THREAD.

BY MRS. C. PARK.

It is said that when engineers are about to bridge a stream, they first throw across a single cord, and then other strands are added, till a plank can be laid on which they can cross to the opposite shore. So our sorrows may be but the cords forming a bridge for us from earth to heaven.

One cord across the stream—
The stream that doth divide
The earthly from the heavenly shore,
Where we would all abide.

A foot is on the cord—
A little dimpled foot,
That falters not, but presses on
To meet the blessed Lord.

Unheeded rush the waters by—
She looketh not below,
Upward is cast her sweet blue eye,
To the home where she would go
Her golden hair reflects the rays
Of the eternal Sun,
And the halo round her blinds our gaze
As thus she journeys on.

We call her back, but loving words
Meet not her listening ear,
There's other music nearer now—
That of the heavenly sphere.

Another cord so firmly twined—
Another darling one,
Crossed o'er with sweet good-by to all—
The loved ones left alone.

And one by one the cords are twined,
Till all our treasures sweet
Have walked across the narrow bridge
With firm and willing feet.

And on the other shore they stand,
Methinks I see them all,
With each a golden cord in hand,
And thus I hear them call.

Come to us father—mother dear,
Earth's wayside is but rough,
We've twined the cords—pass without fear,
The bridge is firm enough.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE WOOD-CARVER'S DAUGHTER.

BY ANNA M. CARTER.

It was a warm summer afternoon and Henry Ellis and his sister sat talking together by an open window in Henry Street, Brooklyn. Henry Ellis was a teacher of music in one of our southern cities, and was now spending his vacation with his sister.

"So, Henry," said Annie, laughingly, "you are willing to tell me by word of mouth what you

so persistently have written, namely, that you have not lost your heart to any of your dark-eyed pupils?"

"On my honor, no, Annie; I see every day beautiful, pleasant girls, but it must be that the right one has not come along, for I am perfectly heart whole. That is the honest truth. I have seen none who can compare with you, my dear sister, and I shall assuredly wait until I do."

"Gross flattery!" exclaimed Annie, gleefully, and she looked fondly at her brother.

Robert Ellis, father of the two young people present, died when Annie, who is six years younger than her brother, was but a few years old. Three years passed, and the mother rejoined her husband in that better world, leaving the two children to the care of her only brother and his wife, Mr. Edward Morris. Mr. Morris and his wife faithfully supplied the loss of parents to Henry and Annie. At the time my story opens Annie was just twenty and Henry twenty-six. The relations with whom they made it their home being far from rich, both Annie and Henry made the best use of their talents. Both were gifted with rare musical talents. Henry taught music in a seminary in the South, and Annie taught it in Brooklyn. She also sang at one of the churches, and gave lessons in drawing and painting twice a week to a small, select class of pupils.

After a moment's pause, Annie said, musingly:

"Do you know, Henry, I have come to the conclusion that in some respects I am a very selfish person?"

"I am sure I did not, sis. What put that notion into your busy head?"

"You need not laugh, Hen., for it is the honest truth. I know we cannot always live for each other as we have done, and—"

"Well, I should think not," said Henry, interrupting her; "since during my absence you have managed to appropriate to yourself one of the best fellows that ever lived."

"That's just it, brother mine. I have made my choice, but for all that, I don't want you to make yours. I dread it. Now isn't that a piece of pure selfishness?"

"Not exactly. It's rather flattering to me, if it is selfishness."

"Real dog in the manger feeding. But joking aside, dear Hen. How is it, that situated as you have been, you have managed to keep your heart all your own nearly three years? Young, handsome, fascinating and intelligent, I don't see how it has happened that if you did not fall in love with some of your pupils, they did not fall in love with you?"

"Perhaps, dear Annie, like Ralph Cranfield, in Hawthorne's *Threefold Destiny*, it is decreed that I shall find my mate nearer home. But, Annie, dear, I am very different person 'ere to what I am among my pupils. I'll show you."

So saying, Henry Ellis rose and bowed a stiff, formal bow, and said in precise, hard tones :

"Good afternoon, Miss Ellis. Did your last lesson prove as difficult as you feared? The next I hope will be more interesting if not more difficult."

Annie screamed with laughter and sprang from her chair.

"Off with your hundred old manners! I should be verily frightened out of my wits, if you were my teacher, and such a frigid specimen of humanity."

"I thought you pronounced me but a few minutes ago as fascinating, etc.?"

"I said my brother Henry Ellis was so; but that term does not apply to Henry Ellis, Esq., music teacher in Mr. Bocara's seminary."

"Well, Annie, now go and sing for me, something pretty. Among all my pupils I have but two, who have voices anything to be compared with yours."

"If you were afraid I should make you vain, I have the same fear of yourself. What shall I sing to you?"

"Anything you please, so be it is a fair specimen of your improvement. I feel lazy—feel like leaning back in this comfortable chair, and listening to your voice."

Annie went to the piano and commenced a very difficult aria. She sang well and with great expression. She had scarcely finished when her brother spoke.

"Annie!"

"Well."

"Come here a minute."

"What's the trouble now?"

"I want you to tell me who is at the opposite window—window of the house where the Marshes used to live?"

"Where they live now, and will continue to do so till you and I are gray," said Annie, good-naturedly coming across the room and taking her station behind her brother's chair, where shrouded by the lace curtains she could see without being seen.

"It was such a sweet face—but it is gone now. I wish it would re-appear."

"Wait, and like a magician I will summon it. I know the charm which will bring it to sight."

So saying, Annie began to sing. At first the curtain at the opposite window moved, then, as the rich, sweet tones of the singer floated across

the street, it was gently thrust to one side, and a wan, but fair, sweet face appeared, the head slightly bent in a listening attitude, and the very soul looking out from the large, blue eyes. Annie still carrying the air, sang on though the words were changed.

"See, brother mine, the charm works well—behold the face, the angel face appears. Look at the eyes, such deep blue, and the wavy, golden hair—the lovely mouth—the parted lips—all, all is fair. When you have looked your fill, the charm shall stop, and I to you a wondrous tale will tell, will tell."

So sang Annie in her brother's ear. But the cessation of the song was not needed to cause the disappearance of that lovely face. Another face, that of an older woman appeared, and with a rude motion, almost a push, the girl was removed from her place, and the curtain slowly drooped across the window.

"What an old hag Mrs. Marsh looked like. I declare she is a perfect Shrulte."

"You are not far from the right there."

"I used to think her quite a notable sort of a woman, Annie."

"And I used to think her a tolerable termagant."

"Who is the girl she treated so rudely—a relation?"

"A little drudge she has hired lately."

"A servant!"

"Even so. A miserable life the poor child leads with those two quarrelsome old people. I often hear both Mrs. Marsh and her husband scolding her roundly, and from her face I don't believe she deserves it at all. From my painting room in the attic, I can look directly into the dreary place occupied by the poor child, and have seen her shed many tears."

"Poor thing! Can nothing be done to alleviate her sufferings, Annie?" questioned Henry, gravely.

"I have often wished to liberate her from such thraldom, but have been unable to hit on any available plan for doing so. I have often been tempted to rush across the street and bear her off from before the very eyes of Madame Marsh, old dragon that she is! She—but there goes Mr. and Mrs. Marsh to attend some tea fight, or something of the sort, and you may learn by your own senses what I was about to tell you. Come up into my studio and you will hear and see."

"Wont staying here do as well?"

"No, Mr. Laziness, so come along."

Up stairs the brother and sister went. When they were at last in the attic room, where stood a

couple of easels, some canvasses, and which smelt strongly of oil paint, Annie motioned her brother to come to the window. As Henry obeyed his sister's signal, a gush of melody filled the air. Looking across the street, Henry saw in the opposite attic, the face which had so charmed his fancy. Sitting in a low chair by the window, with a narrow sunbeam just tinging her golden hair, and her dark, blue eyes raised to heaven, was the little servant of the Marshes, and from her parted lips welled forth the exquisite melody. It was one of Annie's favorite arias that the little drudge was pouring forth, and though the voice gave evidence of want of culture, it was clear, sweet and flexible, and the expression was perfectly faultless.

"Himmel! Annie! what a voice!"

"I knew you would be charmed with it. I longed for you to hear it."

"Are the Marshes paying any attention to the cultivation of it?"

"Not they, indeed! On the contrary, they all beat her, if they hear her singing; and it is only when she is alone in the house, that she dares sing even in her own room. It is a perfect shame to have such a voice go to waste, and I have thought anxiously of trying to get her away and have her taught singing. Hear that rich, clear A! She can go higher still."

Henry seemed lost in thought. At last he raised his head.

"I think I can help you, Annie. The Marshes are in all probability very penurious—they cannot pay her much. Suppose the child struck for higher wages—so high that they wouldn't pay—and then they would send her off! Suppose you trip over and find out what you can before the old dragon's return? It is perfectly terrible to think of such a voice as that left to waste."

"I'll do it." And suiting the action to the word, Annie, bonnetless and shawlless, flew across the street and quite soon made her appearance, looking joyous and triumphant.

"Well, Annie!" said Henry, who was waiting very impatiently in the parlor.

"Let me get my breath and you shall hear all!" said Annie, sinking into a chair.

In a few seconds, she started up.

"Listen, now—it is better than we could have hoped for! She is a Swede—her name Amalia Svanberg—an orphan. Her mother died when she was very young, but her father only a few months ago and under very distressing circumstances. Mr. Svanberg was a wood-carver by trade, though educated far beyond his station. After the death of his wife, misfortune seemed to follow him; his fortunes grew worse and

worse every year, till at last he determined to leave his native land and come to this country, where he hoped to make a good living by carving furniture. Converting all his worldly goods—and they were few—into money, he started for this country with his daughter. When the voyage was half made, he sickened, died, and was buried in the ocean's depth. Here Amalia knew not a soul—so young, just eighteen, so handsome and completely penniless! Arrived in New York, she obtained cheap lodgings with an old lady, a friend of one of the sailors—a good soul, but poor. Fatigue and sorrow did their work, and three days after landing, she was stricken down with a fever. When she recovered, her money had all gone; and, unwilling to be a burden to the old woman who had sheltered her, she set out to obtain employment. She begged from house to house for work. One day—the second she had tried—she came to a house where Mrs. Marsh was visiting, and who engaged her at six shillings per week. She can embroider beautifully, besides designing her own patterns and carving a little on wood—which she learned to do on ship-board before her father died. She speaks English with quite a broad accent. She seemed quite frightened, when I told her to ask higher wages—that if she did, and the Marshes discarded her, I would take her. I told her that I was going to be married, and needed a seamstress constantly in the house, and would take her in that capacity. You should have seen her pretty face brighten up."

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Henry. "You are worth your weight in gold, Annie!"

And he seized her by the waist and whirled her round the room.

"Stop, Harry—stop! You'll tumble my hair and muss my collar!"

"A fig for that! Such a glorious voice!"

The next day, Amalia Svanberg was installed in a cozy little room adjoining that of Annie's, and busily engaged in some delicate piece of embroidery. From that day, the little Swede's life began to brighten. She proved to be intelligent and well educated, and before long she was raised from the position of seamstress to that of companion; and Annie gave her instructions in music, and received, in turn, lessons in Swedish. Very soon, in an incredibly short space of time, Annie could teach no more—the pupil excelled the master; and then she took lessons of a famous Italian, Signor Bertuccio. Under him, Amalia made rapid—almost unheard-of rapid—progress.

About a year after Amalia first entered Mr. Morris's house, the following conversation took

place between the two girls. Amalia had been sitting silent. Suddenly she raised her head.

"Annie, Signor Bertuccio says I am now qualified to sing in public, and urges me to do so."

"Why Annie, dear, I never dreamed of such a thing!" exclaimed Annie, impetuously.

"But I have. I am an orphan without any ties here, and my voice is my fortune. Ever since I became aware of the powers God had given me, I determined to use them. My life, until I came with you, dear Annie, had been one long scene of sorrow and privation. I seem to have another life pointed out to me. If my father and mother had lived, I might have been called to a domestic life; as it is, there are no such ties, and God bids me now go forth and use the talents he has given me, and not bury them. I told Signor Bertuccio that I would sing at his next concert."

"How could you, Amy?"

"I thought deeply about it, Annie. My life with you has been very pleasant—almost too pleasant, for it partially unfit me for what my duty demands of me. But this life cannot last, and I have decided what to do."

"Amy, dear, it is dreadful to appear in public. I feel as if it was throwing away part of your womanly dignity."

"Not so. Remember Jenny Lind. Although I cannot, like her, expect to be famous, yet I can, like her, keep my womanly dignity, purity and faith unspotted, unstained through life."

"I believe that, Amy; but I do not want you to enter a public life."

"Do not seek to turn me, Annie, for I think I have chosen rightly."

"Amy, does your heart lay in this choice? Do you willingly give up the pure happiness of the fireside, of our pleasant home, to go out into the world?"

An agonized look passed over Amalia Svanberg's beautiful face—a shadow of some great pain. But an instant it was there; but the keen eyes of Annie had noted it, and she had her own thoughts, though she said nothing, but waited for Amy to answer, which she did, after a moment's pause, in this wise:

"Annie, if you love me, do not question me any more, but help me to do what I firmly consider to be my duty. Good night."

So saying, she passed out of the room.

Annie remained for a few minutes absorbed in thought, then going to her writing-desk, hastily penned the following lines:

"DEAR HENRY,—For once you have not

dealt wholly frankly with me, but I have read your heart. I do not complain or blame. Amy has just left me. Before she went to her room, she informed me that she was to sing at Signor Bertuccio's next evening rehearsal or concert. I reasoned with her, tried to win her from her determination, but she is resolved upon it—thinks it is her duty. With her timid, retiring nature, I know she shrinks from such a life; yet she looks upon it as the right course, and once assured of that, she would do her duty if she went through fire or water. I cannot tell what to do. To you, brother, I look for aid. The concert is announced for next Tuesday. I am in sore trouble. Good night.

"Your loving sister, ANNIE.
"Brooklyn, N. Y., Friday evening, Dec. 10, 1857."

The hall was crowded to overflowing with a very select audience. It was a moderate-sized room, and seemed more like a private parlor than a concert-hall. The windows were draped with rich curtains, the floor covered with a soft carpet, and the walls decorated here and there with pictures. It was the night of the second concert given by Signor Bertuccio, who was deservedly a favorite, and, as usual, the audience—for the number of tickets issued were but few—were music-loving, appreciative people. Little Ernestine Laruc, a tiny, black-eyed girl, a little prodigy, had finished her startling fantasia on the piano, and silence reigned, broken only by the low hum of voices, when the door beside the platform opened, and Signor Bertuccio appeared, leading Amalia Svanberg.

Amalia was just twenty, tall, slender, graceful and beautiful, with deep, soul-lit blue eyes, and a wreath of golden hair. She was attired richly, yet simply, in white silk, trimmed with rich lace—her sole ornament a bunch of blush roses fastened on her breast. Annie Ellis, who sat in a far corner, almost hid from sight, saw by the flitting color in Amy's face how much she was agitated, and trembled for her. The prelude ended, Amy's voice swelled forth—at first rather tremulously, but as she went on, gaining confidence and power—till the audience listened almost breathlessly to its wondrous sweetness. The cavatina ended, Amalia was led from the platform, or stage, half-fainting. The enthusiastic plaudits sounded afar off, and as the door closed behind her, a sudden blackness came before her eyes.

"Some water—quick! Mademoiselle Svanberg has fainted," hurriedly spoke Signor Bertuccio.

A glass was held to her lips, and a voice, which did more good than the water, said:

"Mr. Morris's carriage waits."

With a sudden start, Amalia roused up and, with a sort of clinging, weary feeling, took the

arm that was offered her—took Henry Ellis's arm. He had almost to carry her, she was so weak. As soon as they were seated in the carriage, Annie and Amalia on one seat, and Henry opposite them, Amy spoke :

"Mr. Ellis, I did not know you had arrived—did not know, in fact, that you were expected."

"I was not expected—perhaps not even wished for. I got here just after the concert had begun—got here just in time to witness your great success. I suppose you are satisfied now."

"Of course." The words were spoken wearily.

"You would be unreasonable, if you were not, for it was a decided triumph."

No notice was taken of that remark. A long pause ensued. Annie leaned back in the carriage, pretending sleep, while the vehicle rolled on and soon reached Mr. Morris's house. The steps being let down, Annie sprang out unaided, leaving Henry to assist Amy. Perfectly silent, the two entered the house—Henry leading Amy to the foot of the stairs. Just as she was about to bid him good night and follow Annie, who was already out of sight, Henry said, in a deep, earnest tone : "Miss Svanberg, are you truly satisfied with the life you have chosen?"

"I have chosen."

The answer came in a low, quiet tone ; but taking one step forward, Amy fainted. In a moment Annie, who had been leaning over the railing, was down stairs and helping Henry restore the silly girl to consciousness. When her senses returned, Annie ran away and left them.

The next day Annie, Henry and Amy were sitting together in the parlor. Annie spoke :

"Signor Bertuccio called to day, Amy, to inquire after your health. Hoped you would be able to sing at his next concert. Poor blinded man!—thinks you will do credit to the life you have chosen. Are you satisfied with the life before you?"

"Perfectly, Annie dear."

In vain did the public look for Amalia Svanberg's name in the advertisements of each concert. A few times they thought of it; then some other novelty attracted their attention, and she was forgotten, till one day there appeared in the New York Tribune the following notice :

"On Tuesday morning, February 10th, by the Rev. Thomas Cook, Miss Amalia Svanberg, of Stockholm, Sweden, to Henry Ellis, Esq., of Brooklyn, N. Y."

Her name was again revived, and her beauty and talents again talked of for a few days. Their interest again subsided, and all but her intimate friends forgot the existence of THE WOOD-CARVER'S DAUGHTER.

A FIJIAN EXECUTION.

Young men are deputed to inflict the appointed punishment, and are often messengers of death. Their movements are sudden and destructive, like a tropical squall. The protracted solemnity of public executions in civilized countries is here unknown. A man is often judged in his absence, and executed before he is aware that sentence has been passed against him. Sometimes a little form is observed, as in the case of the Vasu to Vuna. This man conspired against the life of Tuikilakila; but the plot was discovered, and the Vasu brought to meet death at Somosomo. His friends prepared him, according to the custom of Fiji, by folding a large new masi about his loins, and oiling and blacking his body as if for war. A necklace and a profusion of ornaments at his elbows and knees completed the attire. He was then placed standing, to be shot by a man suitably equipped. The shot failed, when the musket was exchanged for a club, which the executioner broke on the Vasu's head; but neither this blow, nor a second from a more ponderous weapon, succeeded in bringing the young man to the ground. The victim now ran towards the spot where the king sat, perhaps with the hope of reprieve; but was felled by a death-blow from the club of a powerful man standing near. The slain body was cooked and eaten. One of the baked thighs the king sent to his brother, who was principal in the plot, that he might "taste how sweet his accomplice was, and eat of the fruits of his doings." This is a fair sample of a Fijian public execution. Those who are doomed to die are never, so far as I know, bound in any way. A Fijian is implicitly submissive to the will of his chief. The executioner states his errand, to which the victim replies, "Whatever the king says, must be done."—*Fiji and the Fijians.*

AN ARTISTIC THIEF.

The greatest pleasure enjoyed by Prince Gottschalkoff, it is said, is to sit in his dressing-gown in a large arm-chair, before an easel on which there is a fine picture; crossing his legs, and swinging one on the other while he plays with his slipper and smokes his cigar, he gazes for hours together on the picture. He has a fine gallery of modern pictures, and he had a valuable album containing sketches by the best living artists. Two or three years ago, a French diplomatist asked to see the album; to his surprise, he found the best sketches gone, and said so to the prince.

"True enough," replied the latter; "my best sketches have been stolen out of it."

"Stolen! Do you suspect by whom?"

"O, yes—one of my messengers; he took to imitating me in my love for art, and the rascal helped himself out of my album."

"But didn't you arrest the scoundrel?"

"O dear, no! the puppy showed such deucedly good taste in the selections he made, I could not think of having him arrested."—*French paper.*

A LIBRARY.

See tomes on tomes, of fancy and of power,
To cheer man's heaviest, warm his holiest hour.
Turn back the tide of ages to its head,
And hoard the wisdom of the honored dead.
SPRAGUE.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE LILY OF ROSLIN CASTLE.

BY DR. A. C. HURD.

I DO not know why the very name of Roslin Castle stirs up within me a crowd of sensations both sad and sweet. Sad, like the sound of fine old music—the refrain of an air which we have heard in childhood—and sweet, because it was in our ear long before the bitterness of life began.

Roslin Castle overhangs the Esk. It is now only a dilapidated pile of fragments—a wreck of its former self—yet dear to Scottish hearts for all its tender and beautiful associations, and the romantic region in which it stands. By whom it was built, or why such a spot should have been selected for a fortress, is not known; but it is known that in the year 1100, William de St. Clair, the son of Waldernus, Compte de St. Clair, who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, obtained the lands of Roslin from Malcolm Canmore. It is not improbable that he was the founder of Roslin Castle, as the early barons lived at their fortresses.

In the fourteenth century, one of the lords of Roslin had a beautiful sister, who had lived a very lonely and isolated life since the death of her parents. Her extreme beauty, and the simplicity with which she had been reared, made the proud brother jealous lest some designing person of a lower rank than her own, might take advantage of both, to spirit her away from the castle; and, acting upon this, rather than upon any desire to treat her cruelly, he shut her up in the castle, with an old duenna-like woman called Elspeth Dirleton, and positively forbade the latter to allow her charge to cross the little one-arched bridge which was the sole mode of egress from the castle.

Indeed, the anxiety consequent upon the possession of so beautiful a relative, and the fear that she would disgrace herself by a connection beneath her rank, prevented all intercourse between Lord Roslin and the neighboring gentlemen, and limited his associates to a few of the older barons whose estates were nearest his own.

Among the guests not prohibited was the Baron Mackenzie—old, infirm and ugly—to whom Lord Roslin would willingly have given up the care of the young Isabella; and whose attentions, though deemed by himself irresistible, were received with a terrible shrinking by the lovely girl. Nothing could have been more unseemly than a marriage between the two; yet the Lord of Roslin could not see any reason why the blooming Isabella should resist one,

who, if not young nor handsome, was still wealthy and highborn.

Every visit which the pompous baron made to the castle, was the signal for a fit of indisposition on the part of Isabella. It was no counterfeit illness either, for such was her dread of him, that the announcement of his coming was but the commencement of a series of faintings too real to be disputed, and too lasting in their nature and effects to be agreeable.

Suddenly, however, these symptoms ceased in reality, although Elspeth was coaxed into keeping them up in appearance. She loved her young mistress too well to cross her; but had she resisted the Lord Roslin's wishes, he would have discharged her to make way for some one who would obey him. Towards him, therefore, Elspeth kept up a show of perfect sympathy with his choice of a husband for his sister.

"And how is the Lady Isabella to-day?" asked the baron, as he placed his ponderous frame upon the chair of state. "I trust her faintings are over by this time."

"I will call Elspeth, my lord baron," answered Roslin, "and ascertain from her the state of my sister's health." Elspeth was summoned and inquired of.

"Indeed, my lord, the walk round the garden was so fatiguing to my lady this morning, that I persuaded her to lie down. She will be up and lively again by the time supper is over, and will then come down."

"That is right, Elspeth; and hark ye," he continued, "see to it that she is bravely dressed, and that she does not look so pale as she did yesterday."

The last words were inaudible to all but the old woman herself, who understood that she was to try some artificial remedy for her charge's white face—a face, however, which had latterly begun to resume its former bloom, with as good reason for the change as for the former paleness. Elspeth went back to her young mistress whom she had left in her chamber, but the bird had flown. The couch where she had been lying, was tumbled and untidy, as if left in haste, and one silken slipper was still upon the floor. But Elspeth well knew that the pretty little room adjoining, which had once held a bed for herself, was cleared of all such furniture, and now displayed only a rare Turkish carpet about five feet square, and two low footstools of the young lady's own embroidery.

The door was partially opened, but so managed by a cord that it could be shut from within at the sound of an approaching footstep. One glance told the old woman that there were more

than one behind that vacillating screen ; and her conscience told her that it was young Hector Craig, the old baron's forester, who, being a great favorite with his master, was always allowed to accompany him upon these occasions, leaving a subordinate to supply his place.

The youth, tired of attending upon the baron's infirmities, had one day ventured to leave him in the Lord Roslin's care, under pretence of looking at the chapel, of which he had heard so much, and received a very willing assent, as the baron was unusually well. On that day, Isabella had gone to the chapel, after struggling with her severe nervous headache in vain. The coolness of the chapel struck pleasantly upon her aching head, and she felt better. Wandering about, she had playfully entered an empty niche, from which she was just emerging, when Hector Craig came into the chapel. The dim light, her white dress, and the paleness which her malady always left upon her cheek, excited the superstitious imaginings of the young man. He believed that it was a spirit—the animated ghost of some mint who had inhabited the niche—until Isabella, perceiving the effect of her presence, called upon him to come near.

Blushing at his fears, he advanced, and never had the youth's eyes rested upon a sweeter vision. If no ghost, she could not be less than angel—while on her part, she was quite as much attracted by the handsome youth whose beaming eyes and noble brow were but the reflex of as lovely qualities within.

The baron was hunting one day, about twenty years before, and in the very depths of the forest, he discovered a beautiful child, apparently two or three years of age, lying asleep upon the grass. At a little distance, its young mother had thrown herself down, as he conjectured, to die. When they moved her, she had already passed the dead portal.

The baron, never niggardly nor unkind, took home the unconscious orphan and reared it as his own, but without giving it his name. The boy was called Hector Craig, from some whim of the baron's. When he was sixteen, he bestowed upon him the post of forester, more from a wish of giving him some authority in his household, than from any desire to require any service from him. Latterly, since the infirmities of age had begun to afflict him, he had kept him more about his own person.

The first interview with the Lady Isabella was not the last. Every visit of the baron was the prelude to a stolen half hour in the chapel, or subsequently, in Elspeth's dismantled room, now converted into a perfect bower of roses and su-

perf heaths ; while the Lord of Roslin gave no thought to the fact that his sister was actually loving one beneath her.

This had been his constant dread ; but when he thought of her doing so, his ideas only embraced the neighboring lairds, whom he considered his inferiors. That she could even speak to one of the baron's servants, as he considered Hector, was an enormity too great to be tolerated for an instant.

It was true that a few brief moments were all that Hector dared to stay ; but the very scantiness of the time made it all the more sweet, and these stolen interviews being succeeded by Isabella's entrance into the grand hall, where she tried to greet the baron kindly, the youth consoled himself by repairing thither also. In short, the two young hearts had already become one and inseparable, and it only remained for some plausible scheme of maintenance for both to present itself, to take the requisite steps for a union.

Poor Elspeth, she could not go back now, although she dreaded her master's wrath, when the plot was discovered. Hector, too, felt sometimes that he was proving himself an ingrate to his benefactor, and Isabella had compunctions visitings about her brother ; but the affection of the old nurse prevailed, and love, all powerful, invincible, ruled the younger hearts.

A soft, sweet evening had beguiled the young Lord of Roslin to a long ride. The same enchanting hour had brought the old baron to the castle, where in the twilight, he sat in the hall, and waited for Elspeth to announce his arrival to Isabella, and beg her to receive him ; and Elspeth, in all the glory of a new kirtle, had hustled off to see if her young lady's head were better.

The day had been hot, the baron was fatigued. It was no wonder that, notwithstanding his great love for the lady of Roslin, he should fall asleep while waiting. The easy posture which he had assumed upon the long oaken settle with its leathern cushion nicely adjusted, was favorable to continued sleep. He awoke, however, about one hour afterward, and looked out of the window under which stood his temporary couch.

The twilight had given place to a glorious moonlight that lay silverying with dazzling brightness the bosom of the Esk. Upon that bosom was a trace of white foam that caught the moon's rays, as fleecy clouds catch the setting sunbeams, and appear more glorious than the pure blue of sky or sea ; and in that track a single dark speck was dancing like a sea gull above the waters.

The old baron's perceptions did not take in the palpable fact that, having lain too long in the breezy night air, he had contracted a dreadful pain in his bald head, and with a long groan he called for Hector. Hector did not come; but the Lord of Roslin was thundering over the bridge with his swift charger, and soon appeared at the door of the castle.

There was no light save that of the moon; but the Lord of Roslin needed nothing to guide him to the apartment where he usually received the baron, but of whose presence there now he was unconscious. To Lord Roslin's surprise, the door of the apartment was barred, and to his cries for Elspeth, he only heard the response of the baron's deep-toned voice, in high wrath.

"Ah, is that you, baron? Nay, unlock the door. It is I. Is Isabella with you?"

"No!" roared his visitor, in a spasmodic effort to burst open the refractory door, which could not be made to yield on either side. The exasperated Lord of Roslin stamped his foot upon the oaken floor, and the missing key rang back to the pressure of his iron heel. He applied it to the rude lock that hung at the end of the iron bar, and found the baron as he had said, quite alone, and in an agony of pain as well as rage at the non-appearance of Hector.

The absence of Elspeth and Isabella was equally strange; but on the opposite bank of the Esk, where a boat was landing, the moon was looking down upon the sweetest face, framed in curls that glittered like golden threads upon a handsome brown cheek, glowing with joy and pride, and last, but not least, upon the matronly form of old Elspeth, quivering with the pent up fear of her master's indignation.

A fine looking man, apparently between forty and fifty years of age, was standing on the bank when they landed. He heard Hector's voice, and saw his face. It seemed to waken in him some latent emotion, and he paused, as if about to speak, but seemed to change his mind. When they arrived at the inn, the same lordly looking man was there, surrounded by several servants, who seemed to listen to him with the greatest deference, as he gave them orders in a calm, quiet voice, speaking in English.

Hector's sole anxiety seemed to be to procure a private room for his companions, and the stranger instantly addressed a young man of superior appearance, and after a moment's conversation, he turned to Hector, and offered a room to his acceptance. Too glad to obtain one, Hector uttered a hasty expression of thanks, and turned to usher his charge into the one pointed out. Again the stranger started at the voice.

"It is the very tone of the Leighs," he said to the young man beside him. "You have not more the sound of the Leigh voice than this stranger."

"O, father," answered the English youth "do not prepare yourself for another disappointment. How many times since we began to journey, have you believed you have found my lost brother?"

"But this seems so real. Besides, he resembles you. I shall see more of him before I sleep."

And when Hector appeared again, after leaving Elspeth and Isabella, he drew him into the room opposite, and questioned him of his life. Hector answered frankly. He had no wish to conceal anything. He had longed too deeply for the unknown father who he sometimes believed would appear to claim him. And lo, here indeed was the unknown father!

Sir Henry Leigh, a young English baronet, had married a poor girl, but one who in all other things, was his equal. His family had treated her in a way that outraged all her sensibilities. On the birth of her second child, she became slightly deranged, and continued so for more than two years. Her husband banished her tormentors, and tried every means to soothe and restore her; but on returning from a short absence, he found that she had eluded the nurse, and had gone, no one knew whither, carrying her youngest boy.

Half distracted, the husband had searched in vain for years, without success. Only, as his son had said, he had met with disappointment; but this night he felt an intuitive perception of what proved to be the joyful truth.

It was a meeting worthy of the sympathy of the world. Hector explained his position, and placed the Lady Isabella under his now-found father's protection. They all set off for England the next day, and the first step on their arrival, was to summon Lord Roslin to Warwickshire to find his sister, who was with the aunt of Sir Henry Leigh. The latter sent the message, Hector choosing not to appear at present until all was explained.

Lord Roslin arrived in hot haste, but the dignity and respectability of the family in which his sister had found a refuge from the importunities of the baron, precluded any refusal to become connected with them. He staid to see his sister united formally to the Honorable Hector Leigh, and returned to comfort the crest fallen baron, who eventually solaced his wounded pride by obtaining the hand of a rich widowed baroness, much nearer his own age than THE LILY OF ROSLIX.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE RIBBON.

BY WILLIE B. FABON.

A ribbon, blue as April skies,
I cherish as a treasure;
For in it a sweet story lies,
On which I muse with pleasure.

For when the fields were white with snow,
And icy cold the weather,
No wintry weather we did know,
As, sitting close together,

I said to her, for sweet love's sake—
Since love was such a treasure:
“O, dear and darling, let me take
The wedding finger's measure!”

I called her pet names, dear and dove,
My life, my heart's sure idol,
And framed the sweetest terms of love,
And whispered of a bridal.

But all the while she whispered, “No!
Dear friends we could be ever;
But never ties we could not know—
No, never, never, never!”

But still I kept the ribbon blue,
The wedding finger's measure,
Hoping, as lovers often do,
One day to win the treasure.

And hope and earnest love at last
Were victors—words were spoken
That made us both forget the past,
In bliss as yet unbroken.

For then ere long at altar's base
One moment we did linger,
And ere we left the holy place,
Upon the wedding finger

I placed the symbol of the vow,
That time will only strengthen;
And dearer make than it is now,
And with life's season lengthen.

Love triumphed, for that love was true;
I won the wished-for treasure;
And so I keep the ribbon blue,
The wedding finger's measure,

In memory of that one hour
Bygone and fled forever;
In token of love's wondrous power,
That “ever” made from “never.”

ILLUSION.—There is nothing so real in this world as illusion. All other things may desert a man, but this fair angel never leaves him. She holds a star a billion miles over a baby's head, and laughs to see him clawing and battling him self as he tries to reach it. She glides before the hoary sinner down the paths which lead to the inexorable gate, jingling the keys of heaven at her girdle.—*Lancaster.*

[ORIGINAL.]

THE WAGGISH CAPTAIN:

—OR,—

A STRANGE SAIL ON THE WEATHER BOW.

BY JOHN H. UNDERWOOD.

“Take him all in all, we shall never look upon his like again.”

CAPTAIN FRANCIS JOLLIMAN, at the date of the events chronicled in this narrative, was the commander of a “Liverpool liner”—a fine packet ship of fifteen hundred tons, running between New York and the “old country,” and making all her passages in remarkably quick time, without accident or the loss of so much as a studding-sail boom. There were two causes for these uniformly successful trips—the first of which was the go-ahead disposition of the captain, which was still tempered down by prudence to the happy medium between reckless daring and too much timidity; the other was the kind treatment which the crew of the Fleetwing ever received from their superior, and which prompted them to make the interests of the ship their own, and perform their duty with a hearty good will.

Jolliman's name was descriptive of his disposition, for he was truly a *jolly man*, and his baptismal appellation—shortened into Frank by his familiar acquaintances—was no less emblematic than his surname, for it described a quality which he eminently possessed, viz., frankness. Of genuine honesty, kindly feeling towards his fellow-men, and jovial good humor, he had more than is found in one man of a thousand, and all who knew him respected and esteemed him.

He was a large, fine-looking man, six feet two inches in height, with corresponding breadth of shoulders and depth of chest, muscular limbs, and a large and still increasing development of the region encircled by the waistband, a full, round face, luxuriant beard, whiskers and moustache, and clear blue eyes, which, while they could awe the insubordinate into cheerful obedience, or pierce the hypocrite to the very soul, far more frequently beamed with humor, or twinkled with merriment. In short, he possessed the organization which is most favorable to mental superiority. Nature had been lavish of the raw material, when she made him, and there was nothing small or mean about him, either physically, mentally or morally.

His age was thirty-five, and he was the happy possessor of a pretty wife and two lovely children, who sometimes, though seldom, accompanied him on his voyages, living for the greater

part of the time in a charming little cottage on the banks of the Hudson, happy in the society of the husband and father while the *Fleetwing* was in the port of New York, and impatiently counting the days of his absence while she was ploughing the blue Atlantic.

If Captain Jolliman had a fault (as who of us has not?), it was an inveterate habit of practical joking; though his jokes were always harmless to their subject, and so good-naturedly inflicted, that it was almost impossible for the victim himself to refrain from joining the laugh at his own expense. As a boy, he had been celebrated for his sly tricks of this kind at school; as a youth, he had enjoyed a high reputation for waggery and practical joking; and his conduct as a man, holding the dignified position of commander, would seem to indicate that the ruling passion had "grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength."

On shipboard, he had, of course, an excellent opportunity to gratify his love of fun; and the fear of being victimized by some of his droll arrangements, kept officers and crew almost constantly on the alert to fulfil their respective duties, for if any one attempted to shirk, or play the *soger*, he was very certain to be discovered in the act by Captain Jolliman, and "brought up with a sound turn," to become the laughing-stock of the whole ship's company.

On one of the *Fleetwing*'s passages from Liverpool, it chanced that she was manned with an entirely new set of hands, with the exception of two veteran salts, who had sailed with Jolliman ever since the handle of captain had been attached to his name. The *Fleetwing*'s mate had been unexpectedly offered the command of an American ship, at Liverpool, and the second mate had gone with him in the capacity of chief mate. The other two officers had left the ship for another, merely to gratify the restless love of variety which characterizes Jack Tar, wherever he is; and the men who were shipped in their places were strangers to Captain Jolliman, and, of course, not aware of his joking propensities.

For the first few days of the homeward passage, no unusual event occurred to cause an excitement aboard, or otherwise relieve the monotony which is always more or less inseparable from sea life; but Captain Jolliman, according to his custom, had kept a weather eye upon his new mates and men, and found that they were none of them likely to become distinguished for extreme wakefulness, while having charge of the deck at night.

He said nothing, but, like Pat, "kipt up a deuce of a thinkin'," and revolved various plans

in his mind for bringing to pass a better state of things, and having a lark at the same time.

One pleasant night he crept softly on deck, in the middle watch, and, as he expected, found everybody asleep, except the two old sailors before mentioned, who chanced to be, one at the wheel and the other on the look-out.

"This is something new for the *Fleetwing*," said he to the helmsman, pointing to the mate, who was placidly slumbering on a hen-coop.

"Yes, sir. It's all hands to caulk now."

"I wonder if I can't rouse the watch without speaking a word."

"If you can't, sir, nobody can," replied the helmsman, delighted at the prospect of sport.

"Well, keep quiet, and we'll see what can be done."

So saying, the captain descended to the main deck, stepped quietly to the main fife-rail, and let go the topgallant sheets; then springing to the starboard rail and performing the same operation upon the topsail halyards, he dodged into the forward cabin. The topsail yard, of course, came down by the run, and the rattling of the halyard blocks, the flapping of the topsail and topgallantsail, and the threshing of the slack ropes, made sufficient noise to wake the sleepers from their pleasant dreams, and bring them all, the mate included, immediately upon their feet.

The captain hastened through the cabin, and ascended the companion-way, appearing on deck just as the mate had succeeded in opening his eyes, and had discovered the cause of the noise.

"What's the matter, Mr. Bell?" asked the captain.

"The maintopsail halyards have parted, sir," promptly replied the mate. "I noticed yesterday that the fall had got badly chafed in the leading block, and intended to see to it directly."

"Perhaps it is so," replied the captain, "but I am so fully persuaded that you are mistaken, that I will agree to give you a dollar for every rope-yarn in the whole fall that you find chafed off."

The mate stared at the captain with surprise; but he could see nothing in that placid countenance which would indicate a desire to quiz him, and perplexed to know what the "old man" was driving at, he hastened to the topsail halyards, which, to his astonishment, he found in good condition from one end to the other.

"String out on the maintopsail halyards, men. Hoist the yard!" he exclaimed. And the men began to "swig" away at the rope.

The captain walked forward to the break of the poop, and stood calmly looking on during the operation.

"To gallant sheets haul home!" cried the mate, when the halyards had been made fast.

"Did you find the fall chafed off, Mr. Bell?" asked the captain.

"No, sir—I was mistaken; the belaying-pin was broken."

"What! an iron belaying-pin break like that?"

"No, sir," replied the mate, in some confusion. "You see the last time the yard was hoisted, they made the halyards fast to a wooden pin by mistake."

"Just let me look at that broken pin a moment, Mr. Bell."

For an instant, the mate was nonplussed; but again a ready lie sprang to his relief.

"I chuck'd it overboard, sir."

"Mr. Bell," exclaimed Captain Jolliman, laughing, in spite of himself, "you didn't tell me of all your accomplishments when you applied for a mate's berth in the *Fleetwing*."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"You didn't state that you were so skilled in the use of the 'long bow'."

"Do you intend to call me a *liar*, in the presence of the crew, sir?" cried the mate, turning red as a boiled lobster. (The men who were standing round the mainmast had been laughing "consumedly" at this brief dialogue.)

"O no, sir—I don't say you lie, but if I had said just what you have, I should call it a *slight exaggeration* of the real facts. However, I guess the topgall halyards wont get 'chafed off' again at present—so we will drop the subject, if you please. Haul taut the weather main brace, sir; then get a pull on your sheets fore and aft." And the captain walked away.

Growling somewhat, in an undertone, the mate obeyed the captain's orders. The running gear on the mizzen having been tautened, the men commenced the same operation upon the sheets and halyards of the main, while one of the boys in the watch remained upon the poop to "lay up" the ropes.

The captain was slowly pacing the deck, when suddenly his eye fell upon the boy, and a luminous idea occurred to him.

"Joe," said he, "run down in the cabin and stay there till I call you. Keep out of sight, and ask no questions."

The boy silently obeyed, and the captain turned to the helmsman, saying:

"Now, Jack, you shall see some sport. I'll drive sleep so far from the lubbers' eyes, that they'll keep the rest of this watch, at least."

As he spoke, he seized a buoy—a painted float belonging to the quarter-boat, and sometimes

used in mooring her—and gave it a "sea toss" to leeward. It was painted with black and red stripes, and could easily be distinguished in the water, even in the obscurity of a moonless night.

"*Buoy overboard!*" shouted the captain, at the top of his voice, pronouncing the first word nearly as if it had been *boy*. "Hard down your helm! Brace aback the main yard. Lay aft here, some of you, and lower the quarter-boat," he continued.

"*Boy overboard!*" repeated the men in the waist, and "boy overboard!" was echoed from stem to stern; while in a moment all was bustle and confusion aboard—the startling announcement effectually exciting the sleepy crew to a state of activity, and entirely driving from the mind of the mate the transient feeling of vexation at the captain's sarcastic remarks.

"Bear a hand, men!" cried the captain, apparently in a high state of excitement. "Round in on your weather main brace—so belay! Topsail brace. Make fast all. Man the quarter-boat. Jump in, Mr. Bell, and pull directly astern. With a will, men, or we shall lose the buoy. There! lower away the boat. Let go your falls. Unhook the tackles. Pull, my hearties! Bend your oars. Hurra now—save the buoy, if it is a possible thing!"

And away went the boat, containing the mate and six men, in the direction which the captain had indicated.

"Poor Joe!" exclaimed one of the men who had been left behind, as he stood with his watch-mates at the lee rail, watching the quarter-boat as it alternately rose in sight upon the crest of a wave and disappeared in the trough of the sea. "Poor Joe! I'm afraid it's all day with him. His chance is mighty small, this dark night."

"I wonder how he fell overboard," said one.

"I don't know. The last time I saw him, he was layin' up the ropes on the poop."

"Poor feller—he's bound for Davy Jones's locker, sure enough!" exclaimed another.

"Silence on deck!" cried the captain.

The talking ceased, and every one strained his eyes to gaze after the fast receding boat which had become like a speck on the water. Suddenly a faint shout was heard from the boat's crew.

"They see the buoy!" exclaimed the captain.

A few minutes of silence followed, and then a clear, ringing cheer arose from the distant quarter-boat, followed by three times three rousing huzzas which, even at that distance, sounded more like shouts of merriment at some unexpected discovery, than the spontaneous expression of pleasure at rescuing a fellow-being from a watery grave.

"Stand by to give them three cheers and a tiger, as they come alongside. They've got the buoy, without a doubt," exclaimed the captain. And the men crowded around the davits to greet the rescuers and the rescued.

In a few minutes the boat had nearly reached the ship, and the men had taken off their hats to have them ready for swinging in the air, when their comrades came alongside.

"Joe!" called the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir," responded the boy, springing up the companion way.

An audible expression of astonishment broke from the lips of the men, at this unexpected apparition.

"Silence!" cried the captain. "Look out for the boat and be sure to give her three rousing cheers before you run her up to the davits. You, Joe, stand in the mizzen rigging, and make a bow to Mr. Bell as the boat comes alongside."

"Ay, ay, sir." And the boy stationed himself in the mizzen chains.

He had heard everything which had been spoken on deck, and fully comprehended the trick which Captain Jolliman was playing. The men, too, by this time began to "smell a rat," and stood ready to do their share of the work when the time arrived for "the laugh to come in."

"Ship your oars. Fend off from the side," cried the mate. And in a moment more, the quarter-boat was directly under the davits.

"Have you got the buoy, Mr. Bell?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, there's your buoy and be hanged to him!" replied the mate, tossing the float upon the ship's deck. "You sent me on a wild goose chase, and I suppose I shall have to acknowledge the corn. Hoist away the boat, you lubbers!" he cried, glancing fiercely at the men who were leaning over the quarter-rail convulsed with laughter.

Instead of obeying this order, they swung their hats in the air and gave vent to three times three thundering cheers, which made the welkin ring, while Joe, taking off his hat, made a succession of very low bows to the angry mate, who stood in the stern sheets of the boat, as furious as a dog with a tin-kettle tied to his tail.

"What the deuce are you grinning at, you young monkey?" cried the officer, aiming a blow at the boy with the boat-hook.

"Joe is obeying *my* orders. Please to let him alone," quickly replied the captain.

"Hoist this boat, or I'll take the hide off of every mother's son of you!" roared the mate.

And amid perfect yells of laughter from the

men in the boat, as well as those aboard the ship, she was run up to the davits.

"I should like thundering well to know how that buoy got overboard," muttered the mate, as he stepped upon the poop.

"I can easily tell you," replied the captain, who had overheard this remark. "I *threw* it overboard."

"Well, what the deuce did you do it for?" demanded the mate, forgetting, in his anger, the respect which was due to the "old man."

"I sent it to look for that broken belaying-pin which you *chucked overboard*, Mr. Bell!"

At this reply, the men roared again; and the mate turned as many colors as a dying dolphin.

"Now, boys," continued the captain, "I have a few words to say to you which I wish you to remember. I want no cankers aboard my ship. You came aboard to work the ship and perform your duty, not to go to sleep on the watch and leave the ship to take care of herself. You have watch and watch, and when you are compelled to work hard at night, there shall be no job given out the next day. As long as you do your duty faithfully, you shall be treated kindly; but if I ever again come on deck at night and find this watch asleep, I shall give you something to do more disagreeable than picking up a buoy. So remember. Now you may go forward."

Of course a due share of this harangue was intended for the officers of the watch, and they were not slow to understand it. The mate and his fellow-officer held a long consultation after the captain went below, and finally decided that the joke to which they had been subjected was too good to be offended at; that the "old man" had treated them better than they would have done, had they stood in his shoes; that his demand was perfectly reasonable; and lastly, that the men in the watch should never be suffered to caulk again, while *only one of the officers should go to sleep at a time*—the other remaining awake to give due notice of the captain's approach!

This arrangement was directly put in force, and for several nights following the accident to the buoy, the port watch were kept in a wakeful condition by divers "eye openers," such as "dry pulls" at the weather main brace, useless swigs at the fore and main tacks, *et id omne genus*; while the mate and third dickey alternately slumbered and watched, and thus completely deceived the old man, who took occasion to appear on deck every night when he was least expected, but never again caught the officers of the port watch napping; for the moment he opened his state-room door, the one whose turn it was to be on the alert would quietly arouse his

ellow, and by the time the captain had mounted the companion way ladder, both would be engaged in an animated conversation upon some point of seamanship, or whistling "Hail Columbia" over the weather rail.

"So far, good," quoth the captain to himself, when he had become satisfied that the port watch were cured of their caulking propensities. "Now it remains to give the star-bowlines a lesson, for I perceive that they have not yet profited by the example of their shipmates. Let me see—how shall I do it? I must get up a different and more extensive programme of performances for this occasion, for I am literally dying for a bit of fun." And the captain cogitated deeply.

The result of his deliberations seemed satisfactory, for with a merry twinkle in his eye, he stepped on deck and called for "Joe!"

Joe was busily engaged in one of the "fancy" branches of seamanship, namely, cleaning the brass-work about the quarter-deck, and he obeyed the summons with alacrity—hoping that he was about to receive an order to assist the steward (as had frequently happened), in which case he would probably find an opportunity to "scoff" (eat) an abundance of cabin dainties, and "hook" as many "manevelens" as the capacity of his pockets would allow.

"Go down in my state-room, Joe," said the captain, "and take all the books from my shelves, and all the articles from the drawers, and arrange them in better order."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Joe, hastening into the cabin, somewhat disappointed at finding that his destination was not the pantry, but comforting himself with the reflection that there was plenty of wine and soft biscuit in the captain's closet handy.

In a few moments the captain followed Joe into the cabin, and entered his state-room just in time to find the boy standing upon a stool in front of the closet, with his head inserted between the upper shelf and the ceiling, and producing sundry mysterious sounds with his throat and organs of mastication.

"Whistle, Joe! Whistle, while you're at that closet," cried the captain.

Joe started, for he was just in the act of inserting the neck of a wine bottle between his lips, but, being caught in *flagrante delictu*, he was too shrewd to arouse the captain's anger by a denial of the fact, so he instantly replied:

"Yes, sir, I was just a-going to do so, but I found I should have to wet my whistle first."

"Joe," exclaimed the captain, laughing at the boy's impudence, "why is it that all sailor boys will steal?"

"I s'pose it's the natur' o' the beast," replied Joe, coolly.

"O, Joe, you're a depraved youth—but listen to me now: Never mind fixing the shelves now—I sent you here for another purpose. I'm going to get up a little fun with the starboard watch to-night, and I want you and Jack and Sam to help me. Now I will tell you my plan, and you must repeat it to Jack and Sam without letting anybody else hear you."

The captain then unfolded his scheme in all its details to the wide awake lad, who fully comprehended all that was said.

"Now," continued Jolliman, "can I trust you to get Jack and Sam posted and ready for the parts they are to play?"

"Yes, sir."

"What are you going to tell them? Let me see how well you remember."

Joe repeated what the captain had said to him in nearly the same words, for he had an excellent memory.

"That's right—you're good for it," replied the captain. "Now go forward and set the ball in motion. Tell the men to be ready at five bells in the first watch, and come aft here without disturbing the watch on deck. Here—fill your pockets with these biscuits, if you wish to, and then away with you."

Joe crammed his pockets to the extent of their capacity, and then hastened forward, overflowing with delight at the prospect, not only of the promised sport, but of the "reward of merit," which he knew he should receive from Captain Jolliman if he served him faithfully. Jack and Sam were the two men before mentioned as having previously sailed with Jolliman, and Joe soon put them upon the *qui vive* to assist the old man in his funny project. In the meantime, Jolliman busied himself in constructing several articles which would be needed for the consummation of the scheme, and his assistants forward were no less active in getting themselves up for their own *roles*.

The star-bowlines kept the first watch on the night following the conversation between Captain Jolliman and Joe the sailor-boy, and at six bells, the whole number, with the exception of the helmsman, were wrapped in the soundest slumbers. The night was extremely dark, and the huge hull of the Fleetwing, as close-hauled to the wind and running ten knots an hour, she careened over the billows, seemed like a wedge to pierce the inky black space about her which was almost tangible.

Captain Jolliman was up and dressed and sat in his state-room as if in momentary expecta-

tion of a summons on deck. The helmsman was in great glee, muttering softly to himself and occasionally slapping his trousers pocket in which a hard silver was plainly perceptible to the sense of touch, and which dollar had just been presented him by the captain in consideration of a service which he had performed by keeping his eyes and ears closed to what had just transpired on the deck of the *Fleetwing*.

Suddenly the clear ringing report of a pistol, fired apparently from the mizzen topmast cross-tree, started and aroused the sleepers fore and aft; the next moment a hoarse voice which seemed to proceed from some vessel on the ship's weather bow, and at a very short distance from her was heard crying:

"Ship ahoy! What the deuce are you trying to do? Do you mean to run us down?"

The look-out man jumped up from his recumbent position, and glancing in the direction of the voice, beheld a faint light resembling the rays shed from the binnacle-lantern of a ship.

"Sail ho!" he cried, hastily. "A sail on the weather bow. Hard a port your helm!"

"Hard a starboard, you sleepy-head, or you'll cut us to the water-edge" yelled the mysterious voice again.

"Hard a lee!" shouted the second mate to the helmsman.

"Hard a weather!" bellowed the look-out.

"Well! Hard a helm, then," replied the officer, for he too observed the light on the weather bow. "Up with your helm!"

"Down with your helm! Are you drunk or crazy?" came in angry tones from the stranger, but this time from a different quarter. The light had momentarily disappeared, and now twinkled brightly on the lee bow.

"Ahoy, there!" cried the second mate, hailing the mysterious stranger.

"Ahoy, yourself!"

"Why don't you put your own helm up, and get out of the way?"

"Because we never turn aside for mortals!"

"Who are you?"

"Heave your ship to, and let us come aboard."

"Who are you?"

"Never mind that. Call your captain."

At this moment the captain sprang up the companion-way.

"What is all this uproar about?" he asked.

"There is a strange sail on the lee bow, no, on the weather bow, as I live," continued the officer, for again the light changed to windward.

"Well, what of it?"

"The skipper orders us to heave to, and let him come on board, sir."

"I will speak him myself." And the captain hastened forward.

During all this time, the helmsman, notwithstanding the conflicting orders he had received, had neither put his helm up or down, but had kept the ship to her course, and although she had been sailing at the rate of ten miles an hour, the distance between her and the strange light had not decreased by a single inch.

"Ship ahoy!" again hailed the captain.

"Hallo!" responded Jolliman.

"What ship is that, pray?"

"The *Fleetwing*, Jolliman, from Liverpool, and bound to New York."

"Are you the captain?"

"Ay, ay!"

"All right. Heave to, and let us come aboard."

"Who are you?"

"King Neptune and his prime-minister, Davy Jones. Heave to."

"Ay, ay, sir! Back the main yard!"

The captain spoke in a tremulous voice as if overwhelmed with fear, and the men caught the infection, as they silently hove the ship to, trembling in anticipation of what was to follow.

At this moment a ball of red fire twelve inches or more in diameter suddenly appeared at the mizzen-truck, upon which was visible the semblance of a huge eye, wide open, and staring down upon the deck; and after a lapse of three or four minutes, a similar luminary blazed forth at the main. In the meantime, sounds were heard from the weather bow, which exactly resembled the lowering of a boat from the davits of a vessel; with the necessary orders to the helmsman and crew, and appropriate responses. Presently the noise of plashing oars was heard, growing more and more distinct as if a boat were approaching the ship.

All the lanterns on board the *Fleetwing* had been hastily lighted and suspended about the weather gangway, where the watch had collected, by the captain's orders, to welcome their supernatural visitors. And now, a third constellation, similar in every respect to the other two, glowed suddenly at the fore truck; and simultaneously with its appearance, a small boat, containing two strange looking beings, shot into the light shed on the water by the lanterns and ranged up alongside the weather gangway ladder.

Shipping their oars, the strangers made their painter fast to the side and scrambled up the ladder. As first one and then the other tall figure, sprang down from the rail and stood on the deck in the full glow of the lanterns, the crew stepped back aghast; and well they might, for the appearance of their nocturnal visitors was truly terrific.

The costume of both was extremely grotesque. The foremost was dressed in a huge pilot coat reaching below his knees, and beneath which appeared flowing trousers of a sea-green color; his feet were encased in mocassins, curiously wrought with shells and corals, and his head was covered with a bushy mass of wet sea-weed, which apparently grew there, and his huge beard and whiskers were of the same submarine substance. A crown of shark's-teeth inserted in a circular rim of bone surmounted his head, and in his hand he bore a huge trident or three-pronged pitchfork. Barnacles clung to or were sewed all over his shaggy coat, and his ruddy face was encrusted with salt.

His companion was wrapped from head to foot in a shroud of coarse canvass, which covered even his head, and having holes cut for his eyes, nose and mouth. This ghostly drapery was gathered in at the waist by a rope which was wound several times around his person and tied in a double reef-knot; and the terrible "death's head and crossbones," was painted in black upon his broad chest. In one hand he bore a fragment of a shark-fish's bony weapon, about three feet in length, and in the other a large speaking trumpet, green and corroded, as if it had lain for a thousand years in the "ocean caves" of the sea.

"Come aboard, sir!" said the first described, in a deep gruff voice, touching his crown to the captain as he spoke.

"So I perceive," replied Jolliman. "You are King Neptune, I suppose."

"Ay, and this is my respected friend, Davy Jones."

Davy bowed to the captain and extended his hand, which the latter took, but instantly dropped again, shivering from head to foot, as if its touch chilled him to the very marrow of his bones. The crew looked on with terror depicted upon their countenances.

"What is your majesty's will?" asked the captain.

"I have come to punish your whole starboard watch, for the insult which they have offered the Powers of the sea."

"Ay, his majesty is justly offended. He has come to pronounce judgment, and I, his executioner, shall speedily carry out the sentence," added Davy Jones.

"In what have they offended?" asked Jolliman.

"They have mocked at my power, by presuming to slumber in the presence of the storm-king, by spending the hours in sleep which they should devote to watchfulness against the attacks of my servants, the winds and waves."

"And what will you do with them?"

"Secure them in the prison-cells of the ocean, where all are confined who despise my authority."

"Spare them this once, your majesty."

"It is impossible! They must suffer the penalty of their folly. Away with them, Davy!"

Davy stepped forward and extended his arms as if to clasp the whole group in one fatal embrace.

"Stay!" cried the captain, throwing himself between the cowering, shrinking crew and the hideous monster of the deep. "Listen one moment, your majesty."

"Say on," replied Neptune. "But be brief, for we must hasten to the Arctic Ocean, where an iceberg is about to crush a whale-ship into atoms, and the services of Davy and myself will be required to assign to each member of her crew his last resting place in the ocean cemetery."

"Have I not been a faithful servant to your majesty, ever since I first felt the spray of the salt sea upon my cheek?"

"You have, Jolliman; would there were more like you."

"Then, will you not at my request, spare these men this once, if they will promise never to offend again?"

Old Neptune seemed to meditate for a moment, then, turning to his companion, the two worthies held a whispered consultation. At length the god spoke again:

"For your sake, Jolliman, I will spare them, on condition that they kneel at my feet and promise never again to sleep upon the watch."

"Do you hear that, men?" cried the captain. "Down on your knees and promise what his majesty desires."

"Ay, ay, sir," was the unanimous response, as the crew flung themselves upon their marrow-bones.

The second mate, alone, of the starboard watch, saw through the farce from beginning to end, but as he found that the men, with true sailor superstition, one and all firmly believed that Neptune and Davy Jones, *in propria persona*, stood before them, he relished the joke too well to spoil it by any show of reluctance; so, kneeling with the rest, he repeated in his turn these words:

"I promise never again to sleep in my watch on deck, and as I fulfil this vow, so may King Neptune guard and protect me, or condemn me to merited punishment!"

"It is well!" exclaimed Neptune. "Now, Jolliman, farewell. I grant you a prosperous passage, and a safe return to your family."

"Thanks, your majesty."

" Farewell!" cried Neptune.

" Farewell!" echoed Davy Jones.

" Farewell!" replied Jolliman.

" Good-by!" stammered the trembling crew. And the two supernatural beings clambered over the rail and descended backward into their boat.

" Fill away your main yard!" shouted Davy Jones, through his rusty trumpet, as he cast off his painter.

" Ay, ay, sir," replied Jolliman, and with joyful alacrity, the watch braced round the yards.

The three lights at the mast-heads had been rapidly growing dim, and as the ship sailed away they faded into total darkness. In a few moments more, the cheering sound of eight bells was heard, and the wondering star-bowlines hastened to the forecastle to inform their shipmates of the strange events which had just transpired on board.

As soon as the starboard watch were fairly asleep, the ship was again hove to, and the boat of old Neptune and Davy Jones came immediately alongside. It was hoisted to the davits, and when there, bore a striking resemblance to the Fleetwing's own quarter-boat. The god and his companion came aboard, and hastened into the cabin, whence they presently reappeared, not as Neptune and Davy Jones, but as Jack Williams and Sam Peterson, of the forecastle. The starboard watch were effectually cured of their fault, for they never doubted but that the scene which had so terrified them had been real, notwithstanding the hints thrown out by the larboard watch, concerning the part which Jack and Sam had played in the farce.

Several days afterward, the second mate found an opportunity to ask from the captain an explanation of the *modes operandi* by which he had carried out the joke to such perfection, and the captain readily gave him the desired information on the point.

It appeared that the mysterious lights at the mast-heads were proper lanterns, which the captain had himself constructed and caused to be attached to the trucks. When the proper moment for lighting up had arrived, Joe had climbed to the Mizzen truck, and illuminated the lantern placed there; after which he slid across to the main-topgallant crosstrees, upon the Mizzen royal-stay, and ascending to the main truck, lighted the lantern there and in the same manner crossed over to the forecastle.

After Jack and Sam had arrayed themselves in proper costume, they had seated themselves in the quarter-boat which Jolliman and Joe had then lowered carefully into the water. One end

of a spare coil of rope had been attached to the end of the flying jib-boom and the other end placed in the hands of Jack and Sam. By this rope they had drawn themselves forward of the ship and then by holding it fast had kept the boat at a distance of some twenty feet from the ship, while they were still, of course, towed along with her.

A lantern was suspended from a pole placed upright in the bows, and by means of an oar, Jack had been enabled to shift the position of the boat from the leeward, and back again at pleasure. After the ship was hove to, they let go their hold upon the rope, and pulled alongside. When they re-embarked in their boat, they pulled her astern of the ship, and holding by a line which had been thrown over the taffrail for the purpose, were quietly towed along in the ship's wake until they could return aboard, unseen by their victims.

Thus was the mystery explained, and for many long months afterward the captain and the second mate indulged in hearty laughter, whenever they remembered the nocturnal visit of his majesty, King Neptune, and his prime-minister and executioner, Davy Jones.

CONFESIONS OF INFIDELITY.

Says Hume: "I seem affrighted and confounded with the solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy. When I look abroad, on every side I see dispute, contradiction, distraction. When I turn my eye inward, I see nothing but doubt and ignorance. Where am I? or what am I? From what cause do I derive my existence? To what condition shall I return? I am confounded with questions. I begin to fancy myself in a most deplorable condition, environed with darkness on every side."

Voltaire says: "The world abounds with wonders, and also with victims. In man is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together." How did he judge of it? By his own heart. He adds: "Man loves life, yet he knows he must die; spends his existence in diffusing the miseries he has suffered, cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay, cheating and being cheated. The bulk of mankind," he continues, "are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal, equally unfortunate. I wish I had never been born."

Hear what St. Paul says: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day."—*Lutheran Observer.*

LEARNING.

Learning is
A bunch of grapes sprung up among the thorns,
Where, but by caution, none the harm can miss:
Nor art's true riches read to understand,
But shall, to please his taste, offend his hand.
Lord Brooke.